

**REMARKS**

Claims 13, 16-18, 22 and 24-26 are pending. By this Amendment, claim 18 is amended, and claim 26 is added. Support for the amendment and the new claim is provided, for example, on page 1 of the specification. No new matter is added. Reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies shown to Applicants' representative by Examiner Verbitsky in the July 27, 2007 personal interview. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks. Specifically, claim 18 is amended to comply with the Examiner's helpful suggestions made during the interview.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration as the amendments further clarify the claimed honeycomb structure; (c) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (d) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection and discussed in the personal interview. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects 13, 16-18, 22 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kishimoto et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,693,685) (Kishimoto) in view of Amer et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,331,075) (Amer); and rejects claim 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Kishimoto in view of Amer in further view of Kirino et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,730,421) (Kirino). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

As agreed during the July 27, 2007 personal interview, Kishimoto does not teach or suggest a honeycomb structure having an axial direction, two ends, and a plurality of through-holes surrounded by partition walls extending in the axial direction, as recited in independent claim 18. Further, Amer, which is limited to testing of thin films such as paint, does not teach or suggest the use of its method with a honeycomb structure having an axial direction, two ends, and a plurality of through-holes surrounded by partition walls extending in the axial direction. For these reasons, and as agreed during the July 27, 2007 personal interview, the rejection of claim 18, and claims 13, 16, 17, 22, 24 and 25 which depend from claim 18, should be withdrawn. Prompt and favorable consideration on the merits is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully submit that new claim 26 is allowable based on its dependence from claim 18 as well as on the additional features recited by this claim.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 13, 16-18, 22 and 24-26 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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